



The opinions and statements made in this Newsletter are those of individual members and are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee of Buckingham and District U3A.

## **CHAIRMAN'S NOTES**

### **BUCKINGHAM U3A'S CHOSEN CHARITY. 2008-2009**

At the committee meeting held on the 26 March 2007 it was decided that the Thames Valley and Chiltern Air Ambulance Trust would be the chosen charity for 2007-2008. This was the first time that this concept had been adopted by the Buckingham U3A. Any money raised through the monthly stalls and other sources will be donated to this very worthy cause until March 2008.

In our Autumn 2007 Newsletter, we asked for suggestions for the 12 months from March 2008. We have not had any ideas from you. We had hoped to have received some suggestions that could have been put to the AGM. As this did not happen, the committee will take this decision but we would still like you to nominate those charities for which you would like to raise funds. If you do not give us some names we may end up not supporting any charity next year! The more suggestions you send in, the better.

### **ARCHIVES**

The Local History Group has expressed an interest in setting up and maintaining an archive of our early years. I hope that by the time you read this, the project is up and running. Any photos, documents or personal memories of the first few years would be most welcome.

### **MAH JONG**

Whatever happened to the Mah Jong group? I know that after many years valuable leadership, Jess had to give up as co-ordinator but what happened to the rest of the group? Was there no-one who was interested in continuing the group? I ask because I was approached at the AGM by a potential member. If any of the members of the old group are willing to join a resurrected group they should let a member of the committee know.



### **AND FINALLY & TRADITIONALLY**

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year  
John Walton

## **SECRETARY'S CORNER**

Many members will be aware by now that **Buckingham & District U3A is now 10 years old!** It was on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1997 that Eileen Llopis convened an initial meeting, attended – to her surprise - by over 60 people. Our U3A was registered the following February and it is this date we shall be celebrating, so please put Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February at 2.30pm in your 2008 diaries.

Also in February, Group Coordinators will be meeting to report on activities, so if you have any concerns or ideas, channel them through your representatives for airing and sharing.

**Other dates come from the Third Age Trust**, our umbrella organisation. After 11 very difficult months following the disastrous fire at headquarters in Bromley, the office is moving back and the Resource Centre will be fully re-opened. The following events have been highlighted; if you are interested please see me for further information:

Monday 10 March 2008: "Staying Sharp with the U3A – How to Maintain a Healthy Brain" – London.

18-21 August 2008: Annual Seminar, "Life, the Universe and Everything" – Abergavenny.

28-31 July: Summer School, Newport, Shropshire

11-14 August: Summer School, Cirencester.

## BUCKINGHAM & DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER

### CALLING GROUP COORDINATORS

Wednesday 13 February, 2.00-4.00pm, in the Small Hall of the Community Centre.

There will be a meeting for all Group Coordinators on Wednesday 13 February, 2.00-4.00pm, in the Small Hall of the Community Centre. Bring with you a short report about the group and a list of regular members. If you cannot attend, please arrange for another representative to come. You will receive an agenda at the end of January; let me have any particular items you would like discussed before 16 January.

Valerie Shaw

### NEWSLETTER TEAM



**Editor: Don Horne** 01280 813587

**Production: Shirley Knight** 01296 713765

**THE NEXT NEWSLETTER** will be issued at the April meeting. Please submit your contributions by: 2nd April 2008.

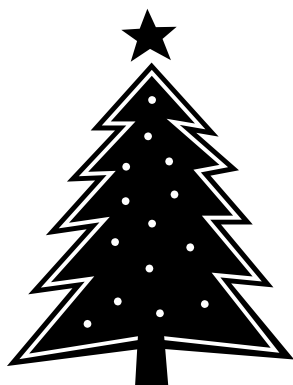
Email to

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or

Post to

**Shirley Knight,  
11 Vicarage Road, Winslow,  
Bucks,  
MK18 3BJ**



### SENIOR DRIVER BY GRANDMA

The other day I went up to a local Christian bookstore and saw a "Honk if you love Jesus" bumper sticker.

I was feeling particularly sassy that day, because I had just come from a thrilling choir practice followed by a powerful prayer meeting, so I bought the sticker and put it on my bumper.

I was stopped at a red light at a busy intersection just lost in thought about the Lord and how good He is, and I didn't notice that the light had changed.

It is a good thing someone else loves Jesus; because if he hadn't honked, I'd never have noticed.

I found that LOTS of people love Jesus. Why, while I was sitting there, the nice man behind started honking like crazy, and he leaned out of his window and screamed, "for the love of God, GO! GO!" What an exuberant cheerleader he was for the Lord.

Everyone started honking! I just leaned out of my window and started waving and smiling at all these loving people.

I even honked my horn a few times to share in the love. There must have been a man from Florida back there, because I heard him yelling something about a sunny beach. I saw another man waving in a funny way with only his middle finger stuck up in the air. When I asked my teenage grandson in the back seat what that meant, he said that it was an Hawaiian good luck sign or something.

Well, I've never met anyone from Hawaii, so I leaned out the window and gave him the good luck sign back.

My grandson burst out laughing; why even he was enjoying this religious experience.

A couple of the people were so caught up in the joy of the moment that they got out of their cars and started walking towards me.

I bet they wanted to pray or ask what church I attended, but this is when I noticed the light had changed. So I waved to all my sisters and brothers, smiled at them all, and drove on through the intersection.

I noticed I was the only car that got through the intersection before the light changed again, and I felt kind of sad that I had to leave them after all the love we had shared, so I slowed the car down, leaned out of the window, and gave them all the Hawaiian good luck sign one last time as I drove away.

Praise the Lord for such wonderful folks!

Share Grandma's letter with your friends

## BUCKINGHAM & DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER

### COMMITTEE

Chairman	John Walton. 7 Partridge Close. Buckingham MK18 7HH	01280-814668 <a href="mailto:chairman.bucku3a@tiscali.co.uk">chairman.bucku3a@tiscali.co.uk</a>
Vice Chairman	Bryan Weston-Thomas, Lime Haven. Church Street. Gawcott MK18 4HY	01280-813664 <a href="mailto:pbwt@btinternet.com">pbwt@btinternet.com</a>
Secretary	Valerie Shaw. 8 Nightingale Place, Buckingham MK181UF	01280-812547 <a href="mailto:valshaw@care4free.net">valshaw@care4free.net</a>
Treasurer	Pat Costello. 17 Campbell Close. Buckingham MK18 7HP	01280-815143 <a href="mailto:pat.costello.uk@virgin.net">pat.costello.uk@virgin.net</a>
Membership Secretary	George Walker, 2 Burleigh Piece, Buckingham MK187BB	01280-813735 <a href="mailto:george.walker7@btopenworld.com">george.walker7@btopenworld.com</a>
Technical Resources	David Angrave, 10 Moreton Road, Buckingham MK181LA	01280-816453 <a href="mailto:angrave@madasafish.com">angrave@madasafish.com</a>
New Member Support and Publicity	Mo Borrill, 2 Burleigh Piece, Buckingham MK18 7BB	01280-813735 <a href="mailto:george.walker7@btopenworld.com">george.walker7@btopenworld.com</a>
Speakers	Jackie Page	
Theatre & Outings	Beryl Carr, 16 Robin Close. Buckingham, MK18 7HD	01280-823808
Monthly Stalls	Margaret Elliott, 7 Fishweir, Stewkley, Leighton Buzzard LU70HB	01525-240174 <a href="mailto:mehippie@aol.com">mehippie@aol.com</a>
Newsletter Editor	Don Horne, 31 Paynes Court, Buckingham, MK18 1NQ	01280-813587 <a href="mailto:donald@horne39.freemove.co.uk">donald@horne39.freemove.co.uk</a>

### EQUIPMENT REGISTER TO BORROW, CONTACT KEEPER

Keeper	Telephone	Item	Item
June Lewis	01280 815849	Keyboard	
David Angrave	01280 816453	Radio Microphone (lapel)	35mm Slide Projector
		Radio Microphone (hand held)	Screen – floor standing
		Microphone with lead	Overhead Projector
		Digital Camera	Projector Stand
Paul Radcliffe	01280 813352	Flip Chart Stand	
Merle Harrison	01280 821693	Miniature Tape Recorder	
Shirley Knight	01296 713765	Laptop Computer, Scanner	Laser printer
Valerie Shaw	01280 812547	Photocopier	
Mo Borrill	01280 813735	Magnifier (new)	
Bryan Weston-Thomas	01280 813664	DVD Player (multi region) new	

In addition to the equipment listed above, we have purchased certain items, specifically to help individual groups to function. This equipment is the property of the U3A. It is held by a responsible person in the group. In general it would not be suitable, nor practical, to lend this to other members. However, any queries should be directed to the committee.

# BUCKINGHAM & DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER

## MONTHLY OPEN MEETINGS 2008

Date	Topic & Speaker	Stall	Tea Rota
23 Jan	Body Language 2 Vic Botterill	Jigsaws, games, puzzles	Friendship Group
27 Feb	Tenth Anniversary of Buckingham U3A Eileen Lopis	Unwanted gifts	Gardening
26 Mar	Graphology Joyce Parkinson	Books & Magazines	Hand Bells
23 Apr	Oxfam: A Trip to the Philippines Jan Tansley	Videos, CDs, DVDs, Tapes, records	Italian
28 May	The History of Claydon House Philip Warner	Plants and cuttings	Italian Beginners
25 Jun	Energy for Life Alex Parerson	White elephant	Jazz Appreciation
23 July	Party	Tombola	Local History
August	Break		No meeting
24 Sep	My Great Aunt's Birthday Book Gill Twissell	Jams, cakes, pickles	Local History
22 Oct	AGM	Group Displays	Music for Pleasure 1
26 Nov	Supertstitutions David Pickering	Books & magazines	Music for Pleasure 2
17 Dec	A Victorian Magic Lantern Tony Brown	Raffle	Outdoor

Monthly Open Meetings are held in the Large Hall, Buckingham Community Centre, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 2.30 p.m., usually on the 4th Wednesday of the month. We do not meet in August.

All contributions for fund raising stalls will be gratefully received by Margaret Elliott. The profits make a useful contribution to the Association funds. Tombola items will be collected throughout the year.

# BUCKINGHAM & DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER

## WEEKLY TIMETABLE

DAYS	FIRST WEEK		SECOND WEEK	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
MON	Bridge - Improvers Creative Writing Exploring the Past	Bridge – Starters Painting Russian	Bridge - Improvers	Bridge – Starters Square Dancing
TUE	Bridge - Tuition Family History Spanish Intermediate 1 Yoga	Gardening Scrabble Spanish Beginners Spanish Intermediate 2	Bridge Tuition Philosophy Spanish Intermediate 1 Yoga	Italian Beginners Italian Scrabble Spanish Beginners Spanish Intermediate 2
WED	French Lunch 1 Mah Jong	Music for Pleasure 2	French Advanced French Intermediate German Local History	
THU	Crafts	Music for Pleasure 1		Singing for Fun Great Art
FRI	Handbells	Croquet	Handbells	Croquet

DAYS	THIRD WEEK		FOURTH WEEK	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
MON	Bridge - Improvers Creative Writing	Bridge – Starters Painting Russian	Bridge - Improvers	Bridge – Starters Square Dancing
TUE	Bridge Tuition Family History Spanish Intermediate 1 Yoga	Flower Arranging Scrabble Spanish Beginners Spanish Intermediate 2	Bridge Tuition Spanish Intermediate 1 Yoga	Italian Beginners Italian Scrabble Spanish Beginners Spanish Intermediate 2 Play Reading
WED	French Lunch 2 Mah Jong Technology & Science		French Advanced French Intermediate German Local History	OPEN MEETING
THU	Crafts	Friendship Group Poetry	Art Appreciation Philosophy	Books Singing for Fun
FRI	Handbells JAZZ	Croquet	Handbells	Croquet

## BUCKINGHAM & DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER

### GROUP DIRECTORY

Activity	Co-ordinator	Telephone	Weekday	Time	Venue
Art Appreciation	Pam Tonge	01280 823770	2 <sup>nd</sup> & Last Thu	2.30- (10.30)	House
Book Group	Gillian Macdonald	01280 822688	4 <sup>th</sup> Thu	2.00-3.30	Buckingham Parish Church
Bridge (Starters)	Russell Tobin	01280 817918	Mon	2:15	North End Court
Bridge (Improvers)	John Murray	01280 813792	Mon	10.00-12.00	North End Court
Bridge Tuition	Peter Holman	01296 720737	Tue	10.00-12.00	Maids Moreton Village Hall
Computing (Intro)	Geoff Suggate	01280 812195	Ask Coordinator		
Crafts	June Olliff	01280 823305	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thu	10.00-12.00	North End Court
Creative Writing	Susie Kelly	01280 816940	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon	10.30-12.30	House
Croquet	George Walker	01280 813735	Fri	2.00-4.00	Buckingham Cricket Club ground
Digital Photography	Peter Cammas	01280 815279	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	10.00-12.00	Buckingham Parish Church
Exploring the Past	Shirley Knight	01296 713765	1 <sup>st</sup> Mon	10.00-12.00	Ask Coordinator
Flower Arranging	Anne Liddle	01280 823565	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tue	1.45-4.00	Maids Moreton Village Hall
Family History	Geoff Kirk	01280 812772	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tue	10.00-11.00	St. Bernardine's
French Advanced	Christine Strain-Clarke	01280 816832	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	10.00-12.00	House
French Intermediate	Judy Austin	01280 814864	Alternate Wed	10.30	
French Lunch 1	John Murray	01280 813792	1 <sup>st</sup> Wed	12.30	House
French Lunch 2	Judy Austin	01280 814864	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed	12.30	House
Friendship Group	Leoni Seymour	01280 817165	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thu	2.30-4.30	North End Court
Gardening	Jennie Newcombe Lesley Suggate	01296 712476 01280 812195	1 <sup>st</sup> Tue	2.00-4.00	Maids Moreton Village Hall
German	Cyril Cox	01280 817843	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	10.30-12.30	House
Handbells	Joyce Bernart	01280 813251	Fri	9.30-10.45	Gawcott Church
Italian	Roy Walker	01280 812836	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tue	2.00-4.00	House
Italian Beginners	Peter Cammas	01280 815279	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tue	2.00 p.m	House
Jazz Appreciation	Derrick Olliff	01280 823305	3 <sup>rd</sup> Fri	10.00-12.00	House
Local History	Sylvia Cooley	01280 816634	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	10.00-12.00	Chandos Court
Music for Pleasure 1	John Hobbs Anthea Kay	01280 812234 01280 821680	1 <sup>st</sup> Thu	2.30-4.30	House
Music for Pleasure 2	Dot Hamilton	01296 714307	1 <sup>st</sup> Wed	2.00-4.00	House
Outdoor	Val Bradley	01280 817746	Ask Coordinator		
Painting	Pam Gower	01280 823279	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon	1.30-3.30	Well Street Centre
Philosophy	Don Horne	01280 813587	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tue & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thu	9.30-11.00	North End Court

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Play Reading	Jane Walker Judith Bell	01280813382 01280 813721	4 <sup>th</sup> Tue	2.00-4.00	Buckingham Parish Church
Poetry	Germaine Radcliffe	01280 813352	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thu	2.00-4.30	Buckingham Parish Church
Russian	Roy Walker	01280 812836	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon	2.00-4.00	House
Scrabble	Rosalie Stein	01280 814373	Tue	2.00-4.00	North End Court
Singing for Fun	Kathleen Richmond	01280 823245	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thu	2.3	Chandos Court
Spanish Beginners	Joyce Williams	01280 813811	Tue	2.3	House
Spanish Intermediate1	Joyce Williams	01280 813811	Tue	10.15	House
Spanish Intermediate2	Joyce Williams	01280 813811	Tue	2.3	House
Square Dancing	Susie Kelly	01280 816940	2&4 Mon	1.30-3.30	Well Street Centre
Technology & Science	Don Horne	01280 813587	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed	10.00-12.00	Royal Latin School
Yoga	Gwyneth Jebson	01296 715674	Tue	10.00-11.30	Buckingham Youth Centre



### FROM THE BRIDGE TABLES

First of all I must apologise for failing to get a report in the last two newsletters, a series of mishaps being the cause.

Regardless of the lack of reports, bridge, within the Buckingham & District U3A, continues to flourish. The Monday afternoon beginners' group at North End Court is progressing well under the guidance of our President and his lady. Unfortunately this group is full and it will be at least six months before thoughts can be given to a new group - unless, of course, there is someone out there who is prepared to start up another group for beginners. We do have a small waiting list.

The Monday morning improvers' group, also meeting at North End Court at 10.00 a.m., under the guidance of John Murray, has changed the emphasis of play to rubber bridge. If anyone wishes to improve their rubber bridge, or just have a friendly game, then there are a few vacancies so please contact John.

The Tuesday tuition bridge group, meeting in Maids Moreton village hall at 10.00 a.m., has managed to accept a couple more players from the waiting list. This brings the membership up to 32 players, 8 tables, which really is the maximum number that Peter and Margaret can cope with. In March the group celebrated its second

birthday in style with lunch at The Wheatsheaf at Maids Moreton with 29 people attending. A "cosy" time was had by all. (There is still a waiting list for this group - is there anyone out there willing to give up a couple of hours a week to start a new session ?)

On 26th November 2006 the Buckingham and District U3A Duplicate Bridge Challenge Cup was played. It was open to all members of the

Buckingham U3A, not just those who attend one of the bridge groups. An invitation to play was extended to the Wendover U3A and two pairs joined us for the afternoon (they were, of course, not eligible to compete for the Challenge Cup). A great afternoon was had by all and in a very close contest Russell and Sheila Tobin were just pushed into second place by winners Ulla Weber and June Belton of the Tuesday Group.

The second annual Duplicate Bridge competition for the Buckingham & District U3A Challenge Cup will be played on Sunday 18th November. Again, this is open to all bridge playing members, not just those from the groups. Results in the next newsletter, (I hope).

Following the success of the November 2006 competition, a second afternoon of bridge was played on the 15th April this year. An invitation was extended to the Milton Keynes U3A to join

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us and four ladies were happy to do so. After a very pleasant afternoon of bridge, followed by an excellent tea, the winners were Rosemary Sullivan and Peggy Irvine, guests from Milton Keynes, followed closely by Iris Mobbs and Christine Cartwright in second place from the Tuesday group.

On May 19th this year the National U3A held its 6th Annual Duplicate Bridge Competition at Basingstoke and two teams of four from the Buckingham Tuesday Group entered, finishing with mixed results, - there is always next year!! It was an enjoyable day out and added to the experience of those taking part.

As you can see, bridge within the Buckingham and District U3A is a very pro-active and extremely sociable pastime.

Peter Holman



### WORLD WAR I POETRY

I am sure that we are all familiar with the Great War poets such as Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen. This year's Remembrance Day reminded me that I had the manuscript of a poem that one of my uncles wrote prior to his death on the battlefield at Hooge. The poem is entitled:

#### **"THE RED, RED, ROAD TO HOOGE"**

*On Parade – get a spade,  
Fall in the shovel and pick brigade,  
There's a Carry Fatigue for half a league,  
And work to do with a spade.  
Through the dust and ruins of Ypres town  
The "Seventeen inch" still battering down,  
Spewing death with its fiery breath  
On the red, red, road to Hooge.*

*Who is the one whose time has come,  
Who won't return when the work is done,  
Who will leave his bones on the blood red stones  
Of the red, red, road to Hooge!  
Onward the Londons – never a stop  
To the sand-bagged trench and over the top,  
Over the top – if a packet you stop  
On the red, red, road to Hooge.*

*The burst and the pow of a Hand Grenade,  
Welcome us to the Death Brigade,  
The Pit of Gloom – the Valley of Doom –  
The Crater – Down at Hooge.  
Full many a Soldier from the Rhine  
Must sleep tonight on a bed of lime.  
'Tis a pitiless grave for a Brave or Knave  
To the Crater down at Hooge.*

*Hark to the stand to fusillade,  
Sling your rifle, bring your spade,  
And fade away – 'ere break of day,  
Or a hole you'll fill at Hooge.  
Call the roll – and another name  
Is sent to swell the roll of Fame.  
So we carve a cross to mark the loss  
Of a chum who fell at Hooge.*

*Not a deed for the paperman to write,  
No glorious charge in the dawning light,  
The "Daily Mail" won't tell the tale  
Of the nightwork out at Hooge.  
But our General knows and his praise we've won,  
He's pleased with the work "The Londons" have done  
In the shot and shell at the Gate of Hell,  
On the red, red road to Hooge.*

Pte. W. J Walton 4874 12 Batt. Royal Fus.

For those who are interested in the geographical location; Hooge (now spelt Hoge) is a small village on the Menin Road (the N8), around two miles east of Ypres. The front line of the Salient was here in 1914 and there was fierce fighting in the area over the next three years, during which the village was totally destroyed. The road from Ypres to Hooge leads past the infamous Hellfire corner, once one of the most dangerous spots in the Salient. Today it is no longer a corner; it is now a roundabout. The crater is the site of a mine blown by the British on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1915 and is now a pond adjacent to a theme park.

I don't know the date this poem was written but my uncle was wounded on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1916, the battalion log shows that he was the only casualty that day and he died the following day, aged 21. Another uncle, a younger brother, was killed in October of the same year at Loos, aged 19. At the time my father would have been 5 so it is unlikely that he had any real memory of his older brothers.

John Walton

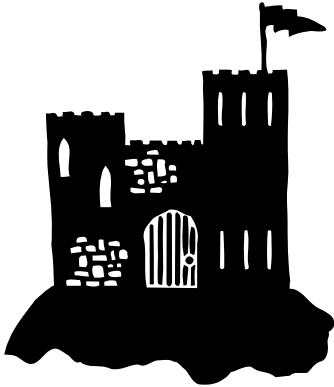


## BUCKINGHAM FAIR

8TH December 1827 (almost exactly 180 years ago- editor)

At Buckingham fair on Tuesday last a bull and cow entered the house of Henry Cox, the stay maker, and alarmed the family whilst a breakfast, the entrance being narrow it was impossible to turn them out. The nimble stay maker, however, made his escape with some difficulty out of the window, and, arming himself with a wheelwright's hammer, with valorous intrepidity proceeded to the back entrance. Here another difficulty occurred as the bull's head prevented his entrance. For a considerable time matters remained in this state – a most perplexing one to the stay maker, his daughter being in a fainting fit, his children crying, and Mrs Cox calling out for a constable to rid her of her unpleasant visitants. At length several farmers, by dint of strength, pulled the animals out by their tails, but not before the partition was nearly demolished, and the family then resumed their quiet repast.

Found by Richard Heaton and printed in "Origins" the Buckinghamshire Family History Society journal.



## EXPLORING THE PAST

By the time you receive this Newsletter the Group will have completed its 2007 programme so we shall be meeting at St. Bernadine's to discuss our programme for 2008 on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2008 at 10.00 a.m.

Shirley Knight 01296 713765

## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

We are now at the end of the year and I have enjoyed being the coordinator for the Local History Group.

We have had some very interesting meetings with members giving talks on their own special

subjects and hobbies. The outside visits have been so well received, our last two visits being - Syresham and Swanbourne. Syresham in September with our guides Keith Mclean and his two helpers, was intriguing, a big village with lots of interest and quite a long walk, we were taken back to the chapel hall for coffee and biscuits. Swanbourne in October was also well attended and we again had a guided tour of the village, it was a much bigger village than we at first thought and so full of interesting buildings and famous people. We were made welcome at the village hall for lunch.

Each month during the summer months our outside visits have been organised by a different member of the group.

Thanks to Linda Tompkins for organising the 'Group Table' at the AGM in October, Linda is our photographer and I think you could tell from her display that we have all enjoyed our visits and meetings

Our last meeting in November will be to discuss this year's events and any follow ups on members' talks. We will celebrate this meeting with wine and nibbles - What else!

We do not meet in December so will begin next year on Wednesday January 9<sup>th</sup> 2008 at Chandos Court at 10am when we will discuss the programme for the coming year and I know members will have lots of idea's. We do have quite a large membership for Chandos Court but can always find room for one more, should you be interested.

Sylvia Cooley 01280 816634

## OUTDOOR GROUP

Our Autumn programme has been varied, with walks ranging from a short stroll around the village of Syresham to a 5.5 trek up and over Chinnor Hill. We learned something about the history of Whitchurch - did you know it began with a castle and the village came later? - and found out the secrets of brewing at the Chiltern Brewery. The programme ended with a walk around the villages of Little and Great Brington and a Christmas lunch at the Althorp Coaching Inn. At the time of writing I am hoping that this day will include a look around the Althorp Church where many of the Althorp family are buried. The weather has been kind to us up to now, which is always a bonus.

I hope that our Spring programme that begins in February will be just as full and interesting. To give people the opportunity to offer a walk we will be holding our annual winter Indoor Meeting

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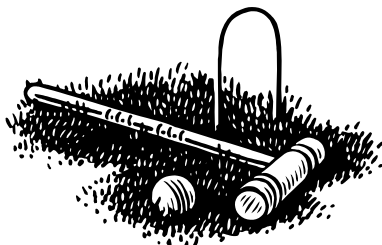
on Thursday 10th January 2008, this time with a change of venue. We will be meeting in St. Peter's and St Paul's Church at 10.30am, in the larger of the two upstairs rooms. As usual, tea and coffee will be provided. I hope that as many as possible will come as it is one of our few opportunities to get together and exchange ideas and put forward suggestions about the Group. It is also a good time for any one who is interested in finding out about the Outdoor Group. Non-members are always welcome

On the subject of new ideas, I am pleased to report that a new offshoot of the Outdoor Group has been launched with some success. This new group is called Strollers and, as the name suggests, it for those who like the idea of a short (1-2 miles) steady stroll rather than a longer, slightly faster paced, walk. At the first stroll it was decided that the group would meet on the first and third (& fifth) Wednesdays and the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, at the Swan Statue at 10.30 am. There is no need to book, just turn up if you fancy a stroll in company. I hope that the Strollers will come to our Indoor Meeting in January and let us know how they are getting on. Hopefully, there will be a notice most months at the U3A meetings to give a reminder of the days and also to give some idea, when possible, of where the stroll will be. For your information I can tell you now that in January, the strolling days will be Wed. 2nd (good chance to shake off the holiday excesses) Thurs 13th, Wed 19th, Thurs. 24th and Wed 30th. On Wed 16th Jan we hope to stroll around one of the lesser known parts of Milton Keynes. To do this we will meet at the same place and share cars to Milton Keynes.

Enjoy your Christmas and look forward to an active New Year.

Val Bradley

### **CROQUET GROUP.**



The origins of croquet are obscure. However, it is known that the sport was introduced to England from Ireland in the 1830s.

In the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th century it grew very rapidly in popularity,

being an agreeable pastime for the upper classes, while being played on equal terms by men and women, the old and the young.

When lawn tennis took off croquet declined in popularity and a large proportion of courts were turned over to the new game. Indeed, the dimension of a tennis court owes itself to two fitting snugly within the area of one croquet court.

At the height of its popularity croquet spread throughout the British Empire and this laid the foundations of the game's strongest supporters being within the present Commonwealth.

It is said that snooker probably owes its origins to croquet. A theory, supported by strong circumstantial evidence, suggests that in the rainy season in India, when croquet could not be played, an indoor version was devised. Based on the already established game of billiards, it had green baize instead of grass, six pockets instead of six hoops, multi-coloured balls were retained and the two games have much in common in terms of estimating angles, devising breaks, etc.

Between the 1920s and the 1960s croquet was in decline. However, since then, an increase in leisure time (especially among the retired) and successful attempts to market the game have led to a surge of interest worldwide.

In particular, it is now very egalitarian. Indeed, it is a relatively inexpensive sport and has appeal to a wide range of abilities. In the past 20 years far more young people have taken up croquet and players between the ages of about 25 to 45 form the backbone of international competition. For a sport in which men and women compete on equal terms, croquet has always been a sport where women have played alongside men at the highest levels. Indeed, there was once a famous Australian test team composed entirely of ladies. For a reason difficult to fully explain, while now women still make up about a half of all club players, a much smaller proportion are represented now at the highest levels.

Reproduced courtesy of The Croquet Association

### **TRAVEL GROUP**

Thirty-four of us went on an excellent trip to Tucepi in Croatia.

The scenery was stunning, crystal clear blue water, and limestone mountains. We went on a traditional wooden boat and followed the coastline to Brela where a walk and ice-cream were good.

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I found the Unesco Heritage site at Trogir very interesting with its Venetian architecture and beautiful cathedral. The waterfalls and scenery at Krka were peaceful.

We had a guide around the sights at Split, including the Diocletian Palace. You could touch the statue of Bishop Gregory for luck and health. It was very shiny!!

On Wednesday we drove to Dubrovnik. On the way we "crossed the border into the neighbouring country". On the journey we saw the fertile region with lots of tangerines. Our guide in the city brought it to life for us. The Cathedral had six altars, each given by different countries. He showed us where the guns were positioned when they fired on the city. It was a chilling reminder. We had lunch sitting in the sunshine; there was a jazz group playing in one of the restaurants.

Some of us visited Sinj (near Split) and saw a Franciscan Monastery with beautiful stained glass. There were two museums here showing local costumes and archaeological finds including fine silver jewellery. Lunch was at a local restaurant. It was a tasty bean soup and local bread. On the way back to Tucepi we saw deep ravines and gorges and rivers sparkling in the sun.

This country is definitely worth a visit.

Valerie McLellan

### TRAVEL & THEATRE

Since the July Newsletter we have been to see "Fiddler on the Roof" at the Savoy theatre in London which was superb. The trip to Audley End House was most interesting and I would describe it as a hidden treasure. Dave, our driver, took us the "pretty route" which was most enjoyable. We have had a wonderful week in Croatia. I can't think of anything to fault it - I was even able to keep my unruly "Carr Group", as described by Saga, under control. We have just been to see "The Producers" and I think everyone enjoyed it immensely - I know I did.

Whilst I am in Tahiti a number of people will be going to Milton Keynes to see "Mid Summer Night's Dream" and almost as soon as I come back we will be going to see Tom Conti in "Romantic Comedy". We are looking forward to going to the Royal Albert Hall at Christmas and then up to Birmingham for the "Magic of Vienna" at the beginning of January. I'm sure that everyone will enjoy seeing the Terra Cotta Army and Tutankhamun exhibitions.

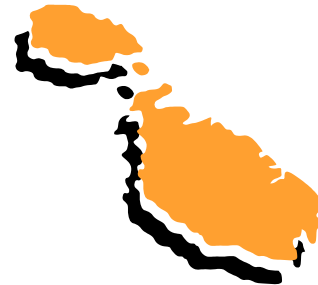
The holiday to Sicily in April very quickly filled up. The holiday after that is to York in October and although all the singles have gone we still have space for twins - at least that is the situation when going to press! On the subject of holidays: I have been making enquiries about going to Vienna in December to the Christmas markets and to see the Lipizzaner horses actually perform and not just trot around the arena. Those who went to Vienna two or three years ago will know what I mean!

I have now prepared my events programme for 2008 and they will be available at the Christmas party but of course there could be some minor changes. Also I don't know what shows will be coming to Milton Keynes theatre next year. I hope that what I have planned will appeal to a good number of people, at least enough to pay for a coach.

2008 will see Alan and me in our usual place at the table waiting to take your bookings. We both hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

Beryl Carr

### MALTA



In mid September I went on a familiarisation trip to Malta with Saga. We stayed at the Cavallieri hotel in St. Julian's bay. It was a flying visit in every sense of the word! We arrived in the early hours of Saturday morning about 1.00 a.m., and left late on Monday afternoon. However, in that time we saw a lot of interesting places. It was very warm, in fact hot most of the time. I was told that one either loves or hates Malta. I can't say it affected me in either of those extremes, but I must say I found it a most interesting place because there is so much history attached to it. Its history dates back thousands of years before Christ. In fact, on the island of Gozo we visited the Gigantija Temples dating back to 3600 B.C. To a Philistine such as I, they appeared to be huge free standing rocks where one sees the odd altar. There are still vague engravings but it is incredible to think we were looking at something that is so old and

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still standing. We were taken to what is known as the "Three Cities", to see the architecture, the houses built of limestone glowed in the sunshine with pretty little balconies on almost every building. We went to Valetta to see the beautiful Cathedral with the Caravaggio painting, Gozo with its Blue Lagoon with its gorgeous coral. Then on to Mdina with its attractive little streets and huge door knockers.

Malta's more recent history dates back to the Phoenicians, then the Romans followed by the Arabs. The great impact was the arrival of the Crusading knights from various parts of Europe. Wandering around the lovely narrow streets one can visualise, with a bit of imagination, what it must have been like. Some of the lovely auberges, built for the knights, are still standing, in spite of the bombardment the island received during the second world war. The Turks arrived in the 16th century but their stay was short and were followed by the Spaniards who were eventually driven out by Napoleon who was welcomed by the Maltese who offered no resistance,

mistakenly thinking that they would be better off under French rule! The French imposed severe taxes and treated the islanders very badly. Thus they became most unpopular - well they would be wouldn't they! The arrival of the British brought relief for the Maltese. One thing that was pointed out to us was some French cannons captured at the time and the enterprising British used them as mooring posts for their ships. The British remained until Malta received its independence. We all know their recent history and how they suffered during the war and were awarded the George Cross.

I was impressed with the Saga hotel, very spacious, clean and an abundance of food, As we sat on the terrace in the evenings, enjoying a glass of wine (all included!) it would gradually begin to go dark and a boat, looking rather like a gondola, would sail past all lit up and playing Italian music such as "O Sole Mio". What a pleasant end to our busy days.

Beryl Carr

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2008

EVENT	DATE	COST	BOOKING
"And Then There None" M.K. T.	January 30th	£12.50	December
Terra Cotta Army	January 31st	Full	Coach £ 10.00
Tutankhamun	February 28th	Booked	Coach £10.00
Sicily	April 10th	Full	
Salisbury	Early June		
Gardeners' World - Birmingham N.E.C.	July	T.B.A.	
London Duck Tour	July First Monday Of School Holidays		
Lacock Abbey Nr. Chippenham	August	T.B.A.	
Burghley House Stamford	September	T.B.A.	
York	October 7th	£399.00	No Singles Left A.S.A.P.
Classical Spectacular Albert Hall	November	T.B.A.	
Vienna's Christmas Markets	December 5 Days	T.B.A.	

N .B. As yet I have very few prices and dates. However, all day trips will be based on 30 people and include entrance, coach and tips, excepting N. T. property which is free to all N.T. members.

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### THIS MONTHS QUIZ - HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR U3A

With apologies to the more serious minded puzzle addicts amongst you. If I have missed out a group I am sorry as I ran out of ideas. Some groups are joined up to stop the editor and cutting me down to size

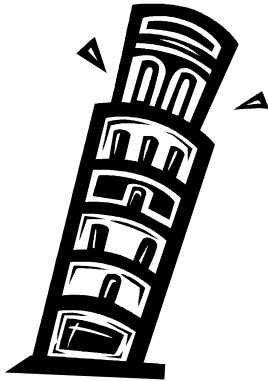
- 01 Hunger is not an option but you need to know what you are talking about
- 02 A precious stone which you must move around to find
- 03 Mr Brunei specialised in this type of building'
- 04 A rainy place which needs plain English translation
- 05 With a slight change this could be a bear in Yellowstone Park
- 06 Lost in the post, when found were all mixed up
- 07 Over the hills but not very far away and a hostelry may be involved
- 08 Would Quasimodo appreciate this speciality
- 09 The Lake District and a certain flower provides inspiration
- 10 Certainly not done by numbers
- 11 Lively, possibly noisy, certainly not blue, think of homes for horses much appreciated
- 12 With luck this years potato harvest will be good for this
- 13 Could fingers and toes appear in this image
- 14 Departed Tenor possibly riding a Prancing Horse and a Painted Chapel all come into this
- 15 Mathematicians love this type of progression
- 16 Part of the West Country came to Town and looked up my Sainly namesake and his friend to reminisce

- 17 Adam and Eve could not possibly have done this
- 18 A Desert Lily relying on a natural feature to make a display
- 19 All fingers and thumbs not the ideal for this devious person
- 20 A measly foe maybe
- 21 The British Museum a paradise for those with a hard back
- 22 No place for enemies here
- 23 This is one oriental if you play your cards right
- 24 Think of great images and a home for Minstrels
- 25 A rhythmic pleasure
- 26 A tiny tot struggling with ABC
- 27 Do you remember Cyril Fletcher he was close to this discipline
- 28 A very fast pace with passing reference to possibly modified gremlins
- 29 Enjoyable mayhem with surprising melodies
- 30 You need not live in another world to understand this one
- 31 A lot of heavy eyebrows and deep thought needed here
- 32 Hampton Court has one so does Letchworth and you need to dig about to get the result you want

Peter Cammas

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>01 French Lunch group</li> <li>02 Beryl's Travel group:</li> <li>03 Bridge group</li> <li>04 Spanish group</li> <li>05 Yoga</li> <li>06 Scrabble</li> <li>07 Outdoor group</li> <li>08 Hand Bells</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>09 Creative Writing</li> <li>10 Painting</li> <li>11 Jazz</li> <li>12 Croquet</li> <li>13 Digital Photography</li> <li>14 Italian Group</li> <li>15 Square Dancing</li> <li>16 Exploring the Past</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17 Family History</li> <li>18 Flower Arranging</li> <li>19 Craft group</li> <li>20 German</li> <li>21 Book Group</li> <li>22 Friendship Group</li> <li>23 Mah Jong</li> <li>24 Great Art Galleries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 Music for Pleasure</li> <li>26 Play Reading</li> <li>27 Poetry</li> <li>28 Russian</li> <li>29 Singing for Fun</li> <li>30 Science</li> <li>31 Philosophy</li> <li>32 Gardening</li> </ul>
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## ITALIAN FOR BEGINNERS



We are going from strength to strength and even astounding ourselves with new found knowledge. Meeting every first and third Tuesday of the month the struggle with verbs and nouns and past participles is well worth it. The meetings are in a rota of our homes and the cakes and tea provided make all of the hard work worthwhile. Our Italian may not be expanding very quickly, but is noticeable in other areas. New members are always welcome especially if an expertise in cooking cakes is proved. The Italian translation can be given and possibly would provide a good homework project.

I find the meetings enjoyable and although I am slow on the uptake progress is being made with the help of everybody in the group.  
ciao e gracias

Peter Cammas

## DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The thirst for knowledge amongst our U3A is truly outstanding and unlimited. I briefly mentioned at the last meeting that I was thinking about a new group and before I could draw a breath there were 25 people asking when and where we would be meeting.

This took me completely by surprise and admittedly, unprepared, but also very pleased that such an amount of interest was being shown.

Once I got over the shock a first meeting was arranged on the 11th of October at St. Peter & St. Paul's and guide lines were laid down, the object being to be as simple and understandable as possible despite the complexities of modern technology. The surprising thing was the questions being asked and how the electronics people are so keen in making a camera do everything bar making the tea (we did that in the old way} that users are becoming confused.

But keep it simple and enjoyable we will. Meetings are every second Thursday of the month in the morning 10am to Noon. Before long David Bailey remember him ? will be envious and might even become a new member.  
Thanks for your Interest

Peter Cammas.

## TEST FOR DEMENTIA

Below are four ( 4 ) questions and a bonus question. You have to answer them instantly. You can't take your time, answer all of them immediately . OK?

Let's find out just how clever you really are....

### First Question:

You are participating in a race. You overtake the second person. What position are you in?

Now answer the second question, but don't take as much time as you took for the first question, OK ?

### Second Question:

If you overtake the last person, then you are...?

### Third Question:

Very tricky arithmetic! Note: This must be done in your head only .

Do NOT use paper and pencil or a calculator. Try it.

Take 1000 and add 40 to it. Now add another 1000 . Now add 30 .

Add another 1000 . Now add 20 . Now add another 1000

Now add 10 . What is the total?

Fourth Question: Mary's father has five daughters: 1. Nana, 2. Nene, 3. Nini, 4. Nono. What is the name of the fifth daughter?

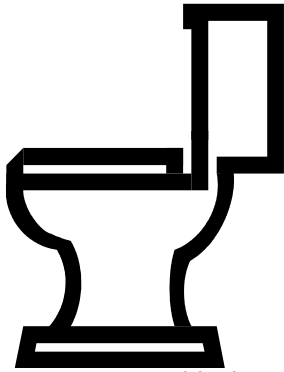
### Okay, now the bonus round:

A mute person goes into a shop and wants to buy a toothbrush. By *imitating* the action of brushing his teeth he successfully expresses himself to the shopkeeper and the purchase is done.

Next, a blind man comes into the shop who wants to buy a pair of sunglasses; how does HE indicate what he wants?

Answers on page 16

**WHY DOES IT TAKE YOU SO LONG?" HE SAYS.**



When you have to visit a public loo there is invariably a line of women, you smile politely and take your place, it finally gets to your turn, you check for feet under the cubicle doors. Every one is occupied.....but eventually a door opens and you dash in, nearly knocking down the woman leaving the cubicle.

You get in to find the door won't latch. It doesn't matter, the wait has been so long you are about to wet your pants! The dispenser for the modern "seat covers" is handy, but empty. You would hang your handbag on a door hook, if there was one, but there isn't - so you carefully, but quickly drape it around your neck, yank down your pants, and assume "The Position."

In this position your aging, toneless thigh muscles begin to shake. You'd love to sit down, but you certainly hadn't taken time to wipe the seat or lay toilet paper on it, so you hold "The Position."

To take your mind off your trembling thighs for a moment you reach for - horror of horrors -an empty toilet paper dispenser. Your thighs start to shake more. You remember the tiny tissue that you blew your nose on yesterday - the one that's still in your handbag which is now burning your neck & shoulders with the weight. So you contort your arm into a very unnatural position and start to fumble around in the deep dark depths of your handbag for that small crumpled 'used' tissue no bigger than your thumbnail.

Someone pushes your door and because the latch doesn't work it hits your head which is bent over from holding the hanging handbag, and you start to topple backward. "Occupied!" you scream, as you reach for the door and drop the precious, tiny, crumpled tissue you had only just retrieved with your index finger into an unknown puddle on the floor.....if that isn't enough you lose your balance altogether and gravity pulls you down ..... down ..... directly onto the TOILET SEAT.

It is wet, of course, you bolt up, knowing all too well that it's too late.

Your bare bottom has made contact with every imaginable germ & life form that lives on the uncovered seat. By this time, the automatic sensor on the back of the toilet is so confused that it flushes, propelling a stream of water like a fire hose into the bowl which sprays a fine mist of water that covers your bum and runs down your legs along with the various life forms and down into your dishevelled pants which have now dropped down to your ankles. The flush somehow sucks everything down with such force that you grab onto the empty toilet paper dispenser for fear of being dragged in too. At this point, you give up.

You're soaked by the spewing water and the wet toilet seat. You're exhausted.

You try to wipe yourself with a piece of gum wrapper you found in your pocket and then slink out inconspicuously to the sinks.

You can't figure out how to operate the faucet, so you run your hands underneath it grateful for the 2 drops there, then around the basin itself.

You go to the towel dispenser past the line of women still waiting, where of course there are no paper towels so you move over to the hand blower, which, yes you've guessed it, also doesn't work. You are no longer able to smile politely to the women, but there is an unspoken understanding between you all.

A kind soul at the very end of the line points out that you have a piece of toilet paper trailing from your shoe. (Where was that when you NEEDED it?!) You yank the paper from your shoe, plonk it in the woman's hand and tell her warmly, "Here, you just might need this." As you exit, you spot your hubby, who has long since entered, used, and left the Men's. Annoyed, he asks, "What took you so long, and why is your handbag hanging around your neck?"

This is dedicated to women everywhere who deal with public loo's. It also finally explains to the men what really does take us so long and also answers their other commonly asked question about why women go to the loo in pairs.

It's so the other one can hold the door, hang onto your purse and hand you Kleenex under the door

**DEMENTIA QUIZ ANSWERS --- DON'T PEEK !!**

Okay, now the bonus round: He just has to open his mouth and ask... It's really very simple.... Like you!	Fourth Question: Did you Answer Nunu? NO! Of course it isn't. Her name is Mary. Read the question again!	Third Question: Did you get 5000 ? The correct answer is actually 4100.If you don't believe it, now check it with a calculator ! Today is definitely not your day, is it?	Second Question: Answer: If you answered that you are second to last, then you are wrong again. Tell me, how can you overtake the LAST Person? You're not very good at this, are you?	First Question: Answer: If you answered that you are first, then you are absolutely wrong! If you overtake the second person and you take his place, you are second! Try not to screw up next time.
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